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Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields: follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

Recurrent themes and key elements identified during the sessions of the Commission on Population and Development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/234 on the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to compile recurrent themes and key elements identified during the sessions of the Commission on Population and Development. The report draws in large part on statements delivered during the forty-seventh session of the Commission, which, in preparation for the special session of the Assembly to be held in September 2014, was devoted to an assessment of the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

Throughout the discussions, States expressed widespread support for the continuing centrality of the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation, in the period beyond 2014, taking into account the findings and recommendations of the 20-year review, including for the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 65/234, adopted in December 2010, the General Assembly noted that the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development was due to formally come to an end in 2014, but that its goals and objectives remained valid beyond 2014, and stressed the importance of responding to new challenges relevant to population and development and to the changing development environment and reinforcing the integration of the population and development agenda in global processes relating to development. The Assembly therefore decided to extend the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation beyond 2014, called for an operational review of the implementation of the Programme of Action and decided to convene a special session during its sixty-ninth session to assess the status of implementation of the Programme of Action and to renew political support for actions required for the full achievement of its goals and objectives.

2. The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General, with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, to ensure that the relevant issues identified during the sessions of the Commission on Population and Development were compiled and forwarded to Governments at its sixty-ninth session, with an index report indicating recurrent themes and key elements found therein, along with the findings of the operational review.

II. Review of the Programme of Action

3. The Programme of Action, adopted by consensus by 179 Governments in Cairo in September 1994, marked the beginning of a new chapter in the intergovernmental discourse on the interrelationship between population, human rights, sustained economic growth and sustainable development. The landmark agreement made the well-being of individuals, rather than numerical targets referring to large populations, the focus of the global agenda on population and development. The Programme of Action is underpinned by the premise that protecting human rights, investing in health and education, advancing gender equality and empowering women are central to expanding opportunities for all.

4. In its resolution 65/234, the General Assembly called upon UNFPA, in consultation with Member States and in cooperation with all relevant organizations, to undertake an operational review of the implementation of the Programme of Action on the basis of the highest-quality data and analysis of the state of population and development and taking into account the need for a systematic, comprehensive and integrated approach to population and development issues. The operational review consisted of a global survey, regional conferences, thematic meetings, briefings and consultations. Two reports were issued (A/69/62 and E/CN.9/2014/4 and Corr.1). The outcome documents of the regional conferences[1] provide region-

[1] *Compendium of Recommendations on Population and Development*, vol. II, *Regional Conferences on Population and Development Held in Preparation for the Review of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.XIII.13).

specific guidance for the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development in the period beyond 2014. Furthermore, the Assembly encouraged Governments to review the progress achieved and the constraints faced therein in the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national level and in the context of international cooperation. In view of the foregoing, the concept referred to herein as the "International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014" is defined as the full implementation of the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation, in the period beyond 2014, taking into account the findings and recommendations of the operational review.

5. The operational review found that much had been accomplished since 1994. Many countries have integrated population issues into their national development strategies. Considerable progress has also been achieved in efforts to combat poverty: between 1990 and 2010, the number of people living in extreme poverty as a share of the total population in developing countries fell from 47 to 22 per cent (almost 1 billion people). Most countries have also recorded a considerable decline in mortality rates, and large gains have been made in primary school completion, especially among girls. The reduction in unmet need for family planning in many countries indicates that more couples and individuals are able to choose the number and spacing of their children than ever before. In addition, 158 countries now have a legal minimum age of marriage at or above 18 years. Furthermore, many countries have stepped up cooperation to facilitate regular migration, protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants and leverage the benefits of migration for global development.

6. At the same time, the operational review pointed out that progress in some areas had been unequal and fragmented, and that new challenges and opportunities had emerged. For example, many people continue to live in a context of discrimination and inequality, and human rights are not fully realized for all. The goal of gender equality still appears elusive, with gender-based discrimination and violence continuing to affect all countries to varying degrees. In addition, the rise of the middle class in many emerging economies has been accompanied by rising income and wealth inequalities. Similarly, while the world has made significant gains in health and longevity, large and persistent gaps remain between the most advantaged and least advantaged populations, especially regarding access to sexual and reproductive health services. Trends in urbanization and climate change both require more cooperative management and leadership, and the scale of refugees and displaced persons in the world today demands far greater efforts to ensure the security and dignity of all persons.

III. Review and appraisal of the Programme of Action by the Commission on Population and Development since 1994

7. The Commission on Population and Development has examined on an annual basis[2] since 1995 the key themes of the Programme of Action by reviewing thematic reports, discussing global, regional and national experiences and priorities and adopting resolutions to further implement and advance the International Conference

[2] *Compendium of Recommendations on Population and Development*, vol. I, *Commission on Population and Development, 1994-2014* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.XIII.12).

on Population and Development agenda. The Commission operates on the basis of General Assembly resolution 49/128, in which it was decided that the Assembly, through its role in policy formulation, the Economic and Social Council, through its role in overall guidance and coordination, and a revitalized Population Commission would constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that would play the primary role in the follow-up to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

8. The resolutions adopted by the Commission provide a record of progress made in the implementation of intergovernmental agreements since Cairo, including responses to new and emerging population and development challenges such as ageing, climate change, inequality and discrimination. Recurrent themes in the resolutions include a reaffirmation of the principles, goals and objectives of the Programme of Action; the centrality of promoting and protecting the human rights of all persons through rights-based approaches, including the right to development as integral to achieving sustainable development, in particular for members of vulnerable groups, especially women, adolescents and youth; achieving gender equality and empowerment of women; and protecting sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. Also highlighted are the many linkages between population size, structure and spatial distribution and their implications for economic growth and sustainable development, in addition to the importance of investing in health, education and services for all.

9. The importance of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights for poverty elimination has been a recurrent theme. In resolutions from the thirty-eighth, forty-second and forty-fourth sessions, the Commission called for universal access to sexual and reproductive health to be accorded priority. It also emphasized linkages between sexual and reproductive health and HIV, migration, education and gender equality, together with the importance of tackling those linkages as part of poverty reduction strategies. Maternal health, mortality and morbidity, including recognition of the linkages between high levels of maternal mortality and poverty, are also recurrent themes of resolutions. In the resolutions of its forty-second and forty-fourth sessions, the Commission also recognized that under-age and forced marriages and early pregnancies increased the risk of maternal mortality and morbidity, stressing the need for universal access to the highest attainable standard of sexual and reproductive health services, including through the strengthening of health systems.

10. At its thirty-second session, the Commission emphasized the inclusion of quality family planning services, comprehensive information about and access to a range of safe, effective, affordable and acceptable contraceptive methods and the need to develop and use indicators to measure access to and choice of family planning and contraceptive methods. At the forty-second session, unsafe abortion was recognized as a major public health concern and Governments were urged to strengthen their commitment to women's health and to reduce recourse to abortion through expanded and improved family planning services.

11. In its resolutions, the Commission has expanded on many issues in the Programme of Action, including the changing age structure of populations and its implications for development, noting both the potential economic benefits from fertility decline in the form of a demographic dividend and the challenges of extending social support mechanisms to ageing populations. The Commission has also emphasized the rights of adolescents and youth, the interdependence of urban

and rural development, the linkages between population and climate change, public health strategies in emergency situations and the effects of the global financial and economic crisis.

12. The forty-fifth session of the Commission, in 2012, focused on adolescents and youth. The Commission agreed on the need to prevent early and forced marriages and to protect young people from all forms of violence, including those in situations of armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies. There was a strong call for access to services for adolescents and youth consistent with their evolving capacities and for the provision of comprehensive education on sexuality. The Commission reiterated the right of individuals to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence, as expressed in human rights documents, and their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters relating to their sexuality.

13. Achieving gender equality, empowering women and eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and girls have been recurrent themes in Commission resolutions, considered to be fundamental elements of global efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development. At its forty-second session, the Commission called for the achievement of gender equality, the promotion of the right of women and girls to education, the development of strategies to eliminate gender stereotypes in all spheres of life, the achievement of gender equality in political life and decision-making and the enactment and enforcement of laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

14. The Commission has also contributed to a stronger global framework to oppose violence against women and girls, a recurrent theme in its resolutions. At its forty-third session, the Commission called for zero tolerance regarding violence against women and girls, including harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation or cutting and child or forced marriage. At its forty-fourth session, the Commission called upon States to prevent infanticide, prenatal sex selection, trafficking in girl children and the use of girls in prostitution and pornography.

15. The discourse on international migration and development has advanced the goals of the Programme of Action. In 1999, the Commission called for intensified efforts to protect the human rights and dignity of migrants irrespective of their legal status and for migrants to be provided with basic health and social services. The recommendation from the forty-sixth session to promote regular, safe and orderly migration through cooperation and partnerships was subsequently included in the declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, held in 2013. The increased complexity of migration flows since the adoption of the Programme of Action was acknowledged. In recent resolutions, the Commission has also set out specific measures that States could take to leverage migration for development and to tackle migration challenges.

16. The Commission has also drawn attention to the revised costs of implementing the Programme of Action, the need to mobilize greater resources, the importance of international cooperation and the role of public-private partnerships and cooperative mechanisms in achieving population and development objectives.

17. In its resolutions, the Commission has called upon UNFPA to continue to play a crucial role in assisting countries to achieve the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation, including for the period beyond 2014, and of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

18. The Commission's resolutions have repeatedly identified the need for continued substantive work by the Secretary-General to improve the evidence base on population and development issues, including research on population growth, structure and distribution, and to continue to assess, in collaboration with the United Nations system and relevant organizations, the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action. There have also been specific calls for greater efforts to strengthen civil registration and vital statistics, to advance data collection and analysis, including for gender statistics, and to accord priority to the publication of timely and comparable data.

IV. Recurrent themes and key elements highlighted during the forty-seventh session of the Commission on Population and Development

19. The present section draws on statements delivered at the forty-seventh session of the Commission on Population and Development and captures the recurrent themes and key elements identified by States during the interactive debate of the session. The themes of the index report are organized according to the chapters of the reports of the Secretary-General on the operational review of the Programme of Action (A/69/62 and E/CN.9/2014/4 and Corr.1). Under the heading of each section, the major recurrent themes are presented first, followed by other themes that received less attention. All individual and joint statements by States and representatives of civil society were reviewed and analysed. That process generated both a quantitative assessment of the frequency with which recurrent themes and key elements appeared and a qualitative analysis of the actions called for by States. Recurrent themes and key elements are those widely addressed by States and in joint statements.[3] Given the large number of countries that contributed to joint statements, the themes addressed therein were given added consideration in preparing the present report.

20. States overwhelmingly noted the crucial linkages between population and development issues and expressed support for the continued implementation of the Programme of Action, which was viewed as a critical component of the future development agenda. States expressed appreciation for the preparations by the United Nations system for the forty-seventh session of the Commission, for the work of UNFPA in leading the operational review and for the substantive work of the Secretary-General on population and development issues. They highlighted the extensive and inclusive global process that had enabled them to contribute to the landmark 20-year review of the International Conference on Population and Development.

[3] Joint statements were delivered by the Group of African States, Group of Arab States, Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, European Union, Group of 77 and China, League of Arab States, a group of 14 Pacific countries and a group of 25 Asian and Pacific countries.

21. A number of States stressed that the implementation of the Programme of Action was guided by the principles of the Programme of Action, including the sovereign right of each country to implement the recommendations consistent with national law and development priorities, with full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of its people and in conformity with universally recognized international human rights instruments.

The International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014[4] *provides a basis for future actions to ensure that development is based on the fulfilment of human rights, individual dignity, equality and non-discrimination*

22. States expressed support for a number of overarching principles that were the basis for the implementation of the Programme of Action and were repeated in the operational review. Foremost among those was the need to respect human rights, with States reiterating that the evidence presented by the review broadly reaffirmed the consensus reached at the International Conference on Population and Development that the respect, protection, promotion and fulfilment of human rights were necessary preconditions for improving the development, dignity and well-being of all people.

Human rights must be a guiding principle for development

23. In various formulations, States expressed their support for the Programme of Action as a human rights agenda, for the strong basis in human rights of the reports on the operational review and for human rights as a guiding principle for sustainable development. A recurrent theme was the importance of realizing human rights for all, without discrimination. Emphasis was given to women, adolescents and youth, indigenous peoples and other groups unable to gain access to their entitlements and exercise their rights, both generally and in relation to sexual and reproductive health. Those themes were echoed in statements by members of civil society. States acknowledged their obligation to fill such gaps by respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights, as elaborated in national and international agreements, as prerequisites for the achievement of individual dignity and well-being. Concern was also expressed about the failure to protect the human rights of individuals living under occupation, repression and/or conditions of escalating violence and terrorism.

24. States voiced support for the attention paid to economic inequality, gender equality and women's empowerment, universal non-discrimination and inclusion and unequal progress within countries in the achievement of the objectives of the Programme of Action. The importance of population and development for sustainability was also consistently mentioned, as was the focus on investing in capabilities throughout the life course as a path towards sustainable development. Many of those comments were echoed in discussions of individual themes, as noted below.

A. Dignity and human rights

25. States paid recurring attention to three major themes within the area of dignity and human rights: gender equality and empowerment of women; adolescents and

[4] As defined in paragraph 4 above.

youth; and poverty and inequality. Related themes, including population ageing and the social cost of discrimination, also received substantial attention.

Gender equality and empowerment of women

The fulfilment of gender equality and the empowerment of women are fundamental to sustainable development

26. Strong and comprehensive endorsement of the urgent need to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women was offered in nearly all statements, with the large majority emphasizing that integrating women's empowerment into the development process was fundamental to sustainable development. Gender discrimination was widely identified as one of the most critical unfulfilled challenges inhibiting development. Several countries called for a stand-alone goal on gender equality within the post-2015 development agenda, with some explicitly stressing the reaffirmation of the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Notwithstanding recent progress with new legislation against gender-based violence, implementation is needed, with greater attention to the enforcement of laws

27. Among the range of proposals to fulfil gender equality made by States, the most prominent attention was given to the urgent need to eradicate gender-based violence and to put in place new health and social interventions to ensure treatment and support for victims of violence. While many States referred to new policies, legislation and special measures being put in place, none reported progress in reducing gender-based violence.

The human rights of women and girls must be respected, protected and fulfilled, and all discriminatory and harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation or cutting, should be eliminated

28. Respecting and promoting the human rights of women and girls was recognized by many States as central to the eradication of poverty and the achievement of sustainable development. The need to eliminate discriminatory and traditional practices that thwart the human rights and lifelong opportunities of women and girls, with serious harmful consequences, was broadly addressed. States reported that, while many harmful traditional practices were being tackled through legislation and specific measures, progress had been slow. The need to improve girls' educational opportunities, including by ensuring that child, early and forced marriage and/or pregnancy did not force girls to drop out of school, was widely emphasized. Those themes were reiterated by various members of civil society.

Women's economic justice and full participation in political life are basic rights and vital means of bringing about greater economic and social development

29. It was recognized in a large majority of statements that women's economic justice was long overdue and that a disproportionate number of women lived in poverty, meaning that there was an urgent need to eliminate discrimination against women in education, access to resources, land tenure, credit and rights of inheritance; to improve the work/life balance and reduce the burden of unpaid work for women; to ensure equal pay for equal work; and to promote women's entrepreneurship. States also called attention to the overrepresentation of women in

vulnerable employment and the need to improve their participation in economic decision-making and control of resources.

30. Ensuring the full participation of women in public life and their equal participation in political life, including equal representation in legislatures, were widely noted as priorities and valuable means of ensuring greater gender equality.

Adolescents and youth

Targeted social investments for young people, including quality education, employment and health, are among the smartest investments that the global community can make to promote sustainable development

31. It was noted that investing in all young people, and building their capabilities, was a global concern. The importance and urgency of meeting the needs of the largest-ever cohort of young people was highlighted throughout the statements, with the centrality of young people to the future development agenda recognized, along with the need to protect and promote their human rights. A majority of States emphasized the need for universal access to quality education to the secondary level, with an emphasis on gender parity in education, tackling the root causes of high dropout rates and ensuring secondary school completion for all youth. States, noting the link between quality education and poverty alleviation, said that universal access to education was necessary to ensure access to decent employment opportunities for disadvantaged and underserved young people, including the urban poor, those in rural areas, indigenous youth and those living with disabilities. The empowerment of young people in the form of participation in decision-making was also emphasized.

32. It was noted in many statements that decent jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities were essential for capitalizing on the demographic dividend, reducing youth unrest, delaying marriage and childbearing and achieving sustainable development. There was a widespread need to align curricula with demands in the labour market to increase the employability of young people, including through lifelong learning in emerging skills and trades, in order to create competitive and resilient populations.

Countries asserted their need for health services and education for young people

33. The need for targeted investments to ensure the health of young people, including a focus on universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, was widely emphasized. States stressed that comprehensive sexuality education was an essential component of education that was crucial for all young people, consistent with their evolving capacities.

The protection and promotion of the human rights of young people, in particular girls, are essential for development

34. It was noted that adolescent pregnancy remained a persistent challenge owing to its negative health and socioeconomic consequences, including unsafe abortion, obstetric fistula and maternal death, and because it limited opportunities and reinforced intergenerational cycles of poverty.

Poverty and inequality

Poverty and inequality threaten future economic growth and sustainable development, the security of societies and the capacity of people to adapt to changing environmental conditions

35. It was noted that, a significant reduction in the prevalence of extreme poverty globally notwithstanding, persistent poverty and deprivation remained a major development challenge for many countries and regions. The eradication of poverty and hunger was widely recognized as a precondition for ensuring the dignity of all citizens, allowing them to strengthen their individual capabilities.

36. States expressed concern over growing income and wealth inequalities, suggesting that they posed significant risks to national and global prosperity and economic development. Those trends contributed to the risk that development would provide economic opportunities for only a minority of the population, leaving millions behind.

37. Many States noted that poverty disproportionately affected women and stressed the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment as fundamentally important for achieving sustained and inclusive economic growth and ending extreme poverty, in particular the intergenerational transmission of poverty affecting women and children in economically marginalized households. States also identified the fulfilment of the priorities of the International Conference on Population and Development, such as sexual and reproductive health and rights and universal education, as fundamental to ending extreme poverty. The need to address inequality linked to the multiple discriminations based on sex, ethnicity, disability and age, among others, was also considered.

38. States proposed three complementary types of intervention to tackle the structural causes of both poverty and inequality: pro-poor investments in basic services such as food security, clean water, health care and housing; investments in human capital throughout the life course by increasing access to quality education, skills development (especially for women and youth) and employment opportunities for women; and the advancement of peace and security to ensure stable political environments that can enable investment, job creation and economic growth.

Population ageing

Planning for and addressing the needs of older persons is crucial for inclusive and sustainable development

39. It was indicated that population ageing represented a new reality and a challenge for both developed and developing countries. Its social and economic implications must be fully understood and properly addressed. States laid emphasis on the empowerment of older persons and the fulfilment of their human rights, while enabling their full and active participation in society and development, in addition to the consequences of population ageing for the pace of future economic growth, the operation and financial integrity of health-care systems (including long-term care) and the viability of public pension systems. States also highlighted the importance of meeting the needs of older persons through social protection policies, with several developing countries mentioning the adoption and implementation of basic social protection programmes to ensure the well-being of older persons. In responding to the needs of ageing populations, States stressed the relevance of the

family, including promoting family well-being, intergenerational support and family-friendly policies.

Non-discrimination

Overcoming development challenges requires an inclusive approach that integrates all individuals without discrimination

40. States agreed on the need to eradicate all forms of direct and indirect discrimination. Curbing inequality through policies promoting social inclusion was seen by many as a tool against poverty and as a key enabler for social justice and sustainable development.

41. Countries from all regions provided examples from their constitutions, laws or policies of anti-discrimination measures and called for policies that addressed all intersecting forms of discrimination, including those based on age, sex, economic status, language, ethnicity, disability, migration status, sexual orientation, gender identity and other social categories. States also requested that specific priority should be given to indigenous peoples and Afro-descendant populations. In addition, States emphasized the need to exert more effort towards improving the lives of persons with disabilities to ensure a dignified life through the adoption of policies and programmes that could help to achieve their full social integration.

B. Health

42. States paid most attention to two major recurring health themes: overall sexual and reproductive health, including maternal health, and expanding access to sexual and reproductive health for young people.

Sexual and reproductive health, including maternal health

Governments from all regions hold a common perspective that universal access to comprehensive, quality and integrated sexual and reproductive health is one of the highest priorities for the global development agenda beyond 2014 and is essential to sustainable development and poverty reduction

43. Promoting and ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health information, education and services were seen as crucial to improving maternal, newborn and child health, to promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights for all and to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women. Most countries emphasized the need to accelerate efforts to expand access and to improve the range, quality, affordability and equitable provision of sexual and reproductive health information and services, including commodities, and to eliminate inequities, especially for the most vulnerable, including people living in poverty, people with disabilities, migrants and displaced persons, older persons and indigenous peoples. Urban-rural gaps in sexual and reproductive health service coverage and the need to increase the provision and quality of such services in rural areas were also highlighted.

44. States drew attention to the fact that too many women, children and young people were dying from preventable causes, including unsafe abortion, noting that both maternal and infant mortality could be reduced by ensuring that women were

able to prevent unwanted pregnancies and have access to high-quality and comprehensive prenatal, delivery and postnatal care services.

States support the vision of the International Conference on Population and Development of a world in which all women have choices over the number and timing of children, where no women die giving birth and where all newborns thrive

45. States expressed commitment to the full attainment of sexual and reproductive health and the fulfilment of reproductive rights. It was widely agreed that the further strengthening of health systems was a prerequisite for ensuring access to quality sexual and reproductive health in many regions of the world, especially for those living in extreme poverty or in remote areas. States emphasized that pregnancy should not continue to pose a serious threat to women's lives and that all pregnant women deserved a network of integrated, high-quality, collaborative care that ensured healthy pregnancy, safe delivery with skilled attendance and emergency care on demand, free access to emergency caesarean sections and postnatal care, which also improved the well-being of newborns. In addition, countries called for the number of trained health workers and midwives to be expanded and access to modern contraceptives increased.

Expanding access to sexual and reproductive health for young people

Ensuring the sexual and reproductive health of young people is a global priority

46. The sexual and reproductive health risks facing young people were widely recognized. The need to fulfil the right of young people to health, in particular sexual and reproductive health, was acknowledged as necessary for the fulfilment of their other rights. Furthermore, States emphasized that gender equality could be realized only if young people, especially girls, were free from gender-based violence and had access to the knowledge, rights and services needed to protect their bodily integrity, keep them safe from HIV and sexually transmitted infections, ensure their freedom from early and unwanted pregnancy and childbirth and reduce the risk of unsafe abortion. Many non-governmental organizations, especially those representing youth, expressed similar positions.

47. States placed strong emphasis on ensuring universal access to comprehensive, quality and integrated sexual and reproductive health education, high-quality information and services. A recurrent theme was the need for comprehensive sexuality education, consistent with evolving capacity, to enable young people to make healthy choices and ultimately fulfil their potential.

There is a global and urgent need for international cooperation to scale up, standardize and strengthen youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services

48. States described youth-friendly programmes under way at the national level and noted the need for programmes to be scaled up and standardized. There was a call for increased human and financial resources to support such efforts, stressing the importance of bilateral and multilateral partnerships to ensure youth-friendly, non-judgemental approaches of proven impact. Such programmes would provide comprehensive, high-quality and integrated sexual and reproductive health services, including modern contraceptives, accessible to all young people, regardless of marital status. Furthermore, States emphasized the need for life-skills education, including information on the benefits of nutrition, physical exercise, avoidance of

harmful substances and mental health services. Countries also recognized the roles and responsibilities of parents, teachers and health workers in protecting young people's right to sexual and reproductive health, including by removing the barriers facing young people when attempting to obtain accurate information and confidential, quality services.

The participation of adolescents and youth in the planning, delivery and evaluation of programmes of which they are the intended beneficiaries enhances programme success

49. The need to implement inclusive, gender-responsive and youth-friendly health policies and programmes at the national level was reiterated by many States, with emphasis placed on the full participation of young people in the development and implementation of such programmes. Some States noted the need to monitor the implementation of existing programmes for young people, including those on protection of their sexual and reproductive rights.

Contraception and the unmet need for family planning

Eliminating the unmet need for family planning and ensuring universal access to a wide range of quality and modern methods of contraception is a priority

50. States overwhelmingly endorsed the need to ensure that all individuals and couples were provided with the means to determine freely and responsibly the number, timing and spacing of their children. That goal was identified as central to the objectives of the International Conference on Population and Development and crucial to the fulfilment of the Programme of Action.

51. Universal access to voluntary, quality family planning services was stressed as a priority. Governments emphasized the need to remove barriers in access to modern contraception for hard-to-reach populations, including the urban poor, those in remote locations, indigenous peoples, those with disabilities and the young and unmarried. Ensuring access to accurate information, education and counselling regarding available contraceptive methods was noted as essential to the provision of quality care and for creating demand, ensuring effective use of modern methods and reducing recourse to unsafe abortion.

HIV and AIDS and sexually transmitted infections

National efforts to end HIV and AIDS must continue to be scaled up, ensuring universal access to HIV education, prevention, testing, treatment, care and support, free of discrimination

52. States noted that the HIV epidemic continued to pose serious health and development challenges. The changing nature of the epidemic was leading to growing rates of infection among the younger heterosexual population, where women were at higher risk of infection. States underlined their concern over those trends, renewing their commitment to eliminating new HIV infections and providing universal care to those living with HIV, as a national priority, including the removal of all legal, social and policy barriers for key populations at higher risk of HIV exposure and transmission, and ensuring that persons with disabilities and other vulnerable and marginalized groups were reached.

53. Many States made a strong call to ensure HIV prevention and treatment in the context of larger efforts to combat sexually transmitted infections and to extend the reach of all sexual and reproductive health services. Access to services for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission must be accomplished for all pregnant women, including rural women and migrants.

The protection of young people from sexually transmitted infections and HIV is a priority that requires increased focus on educating and informing young people about sexual health

54. States underscored the importance of reaching adolescents and youth with adequate information in formal and informal settings, such as by integrating information on HIV and sexually transmitted infections into comprehensive sexuality education curricula and by expanding and financing the roll-out of youth-friendly services.

Strengthening health systems

Strengthening the structure, organization and management of health systems is a priority

55. Governments noted the need to improve health systems in both urban and rural areas, including by strengthening infrastructure, planning and management. There was widespread recognition that severe inequalities in sexual and reproductive health reflected serious deficiencies in the underlying quality of health services and that achievements in sexual and reproductive health would demand the strengthening of the health system at all levels.

Sustainable long-term strategies are needed to increase the number, capacity and distribution of health workers to provide health-care access to all

56. States expressed concern over the shortage and unequal distribution of human resources for health as continuing obstacles to the fulfilment of the right to health and the delivery of comprehensive and quality health services to all. Inequalities in gaining access to skilled care in urban and rural locations were highlighted, with the challenge of retaining skilled health workers, in particular specialists, in rural settings emphasized. States stressed the urgent need to implement innovative long-term solutions to the global health worker crisis in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action.

Ensuring universal access to quality and comprehensive health services is a priority

57. States emphasized the need for innovative funding to achieve universal health coverage and implement pro-poor insurance systems that would ensure access to a full range of quality health services and commodities and eliminate inequalities and barriers for all populations. Governments also noted the need for health system planning to reflect changing population dynamics, including population ageing, the increasing number of persons with disabilities and the rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases.

Abortion

Human and financial investments are needed to eliminate, in an integrated manner, the causes of maternal deaths resulting from unsafe abortion

58. Much concern was expressed over the tragedy and magnitude of maternal deaths resulting from unsafe abortion. The urgent need to establish policies and practices to prevent that loss of life was emphasized. Improving access to timely, non-discriminatory and quality post-abortion care, without regard to the legal status of abortion, was highlighted as a necessary and effective means of saving lives and preventing the negative health consequences of unsafe abortion. Some States also noted that expanding access to safe, legal abortion, under criteria permitted by national law, was associated with reductions in maternal mortality stemming from unsafe abortion.

59. Furthermore, there was widespread support for ensuring universal access to a full range of modern contraceptives, including emergency contraception, to avoid unintended pregnancy and recourse to abortion. Some States noted that prevention of unplanned pregnancy was a proven benefit of comprehensive sexuality education.

C. Place and mobility

International migration

Migration can enable inclusive economic and social development and reduce poverty, but only if the human rights of migrants are protected

60. The growing scale and complexity of international migration was a reality for virtually all countries. The potential for migration to enhance economic opportunities for individuals and their families, and to spur development for countries of origin, transit and destination, was widely acknowledged. While recognizing the challenges involved in ensuring that migration took place in a safe and orderly fashion, States reported their aspirations to leverage migration for development. In that regard, some highlighted the need to further reduce the costs of transferring remittances and to improve the financial literacy of migrants. States also emphasized the role of international dialogue and cooperation in facilitating mobility and in protecting the human rights of migrants. There was widespread commitment to combating human trafficking by prosecuting cross-border crime, while at the same time assisting the victims of such crimes.

61. States noted that poorly managed migration was detrimental to social and economic development and led to unsafe conditions for migrants. The discrimination and health risks faced by international migrants were further concerns. States also observed that the successful integration of migrants into host societies required the provision of social protection systems that ensured access to basic services, especially health-care services and education and, broadly, the protection of their human rights.

62. It was observed that diaspora communities contributed significantly to development in countries of origin through trade, investment and return. It was noted in some statements that circular and return migration could help to mitigate the effects of the emigration of highly skilled workers from countries facing critical workforce shortages.

Internal migration and urbanization

Urban growth necessitates the building of sustainable cities and the strengthening of urban-rural linkages

63. More than half of all States raised the issue of population distribution, urbanization and internal migration. It was noted that a secure and habitable place was a precondition for the development and well-being of all persons. States widely agreed that the rapid pace of internal migration and urbanization were shifting the global distribution of the human population and that Governments must be equipped to accommodate urban migrants and growing urban populations and to ensure the quality of urban settlements.

64. It was noted that the growing number of urban residents, including the poor, underscored the need to improve urban public services and ensure equitable access to safe housing, water, sanitation, health, education, transport and other fundamental services promoting social integration and protecting human rights. States called for access to such services to be improved and for local authorities to be empowered to improve the management of urban agglomerations through more participatory, sustainable and inclusive urban planning.

65. Many States recognized that urbanization and sustainable development were intrinsically linked. Population dynamics, including urbanization, must be integrated into development planning and the capacity of local governments strengthened to ensure effective and integrated urban and rural planning and management. Data on the number and needs of internal migrants and local residents were crucial for planning and policy and for inclusive participation in governance processes.

Rural areas should not be neglected

66. States called for inequalities between urban and rural areas to be addressed, noting that development efforts must be directed also to rural areas and to strengthening urban-rural linkages, including in the form of investment in national and regional infrastructure, energy, transport, health systems and communications.

Internally displaced persons and refugees

Populations experiencing forced displacement owing to conflict and war, whether internally or across international borders, warrant urgent international support

67. States drew attention to the scale of forced displacement and called upon the international community to support host countries in assisting refugees. In situations of mass displacement, host developing countries faced significant challenges in accommodating new arrivals, putting a high demand on local resources and affecting economic growth.

D. Governance and accountability

68. States gave recurring attention to four major themes under the pillar of governance and accountability: cooperation and partnerships; participation; integrating population dynamics into development planning; and strengthening knowledge and accountability systems.

Cooperation and partnerships

Cooperation at all levels is critical for the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014[4]

69. It was noted that international cooperation was essential to catalysing and sustaining a vibrant development process and to enabling equitable opportunities for all persons. Among the range of proposals mentioned by States, three themes garnered high attention: South-South, triangular, regional, subregional and bilateral cooperation; the role of the multilateral system and the United Nations in particular; and multisectoral partnerships and financing. Regional cooperation to implement the Programme of Action was highlighted, with many countries expressing support for the outcomes of regional population conferences held in the context of the 20-year review of the International Conference on Population and Development (see A/69/62).

Partnerships between Governments, civil society, academic institutions, the private sector and regional and international institutions must support local ownership, respond to local priorities and place people at the centre of policy

70. States emphasized that international cooperation should be based on principles of true partnership and that development should be promoted and expanded through subregional, regional, South-South and triangular alliances, in cooperation with the United Nations. Such cooperation should respond to national priorities relating to the Programme of Action and its 20-year review, while building national capacity and ownership. Partnerships should include technical assistance, institutional strengthening, training, sharing of best practice, strengthening the enforcement of laws, enhanced coordination in the execution of plans, building human resource capacity and pooling of resources. There was a recurrent call by States to ensure that multisectoral partnerships addressed country-specific needs and that priorities placed people at the centre of the development agenda. Value continued to be put on the potential roles to be played by diverse stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, academic institutions and international development partners. States called for innovations to strengthen collaboration with beneficiaries, optimize resources and improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The United Nations system has an active role to play in supporting countries to achieve the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014[4]

71. States noted that strategic responses to development challenges focusing on individual rights required systematic, coordinated and active contributions by the United Nations system and by UNFPA in particular, not only in providing technical cooperation, but also in mobilizing stakeholders from the public and private sectors, including academic institutions, civil society and youth organizations, in a global partnership for the full implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014. In addition, the continuing substantive work of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat was explicitly recognized.

Domestic commitments and support by international partners will be essential to the success of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014[4]

72. It was noted that financing the agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development had been a major challenge, exacerbated by the global financial crisis. Some States indicated that their commitment to the Conference was limited only by resources. Renewed high-level commitment to the Programme of Action was essential to ensuring its full implementation, but political will must be accompanied by a strong commitment to providing financial and technical assistance, especially in support of developing countries. It was suggested that the focus should be on common efforts and resources in areas and regions in which progress had been slow or the achievement of goals was in jeopardy. In the face of serious domestic resource constraints and dwindling external support, States noted the need to mobilize all possible resources and sources of funding in support of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014[4] and other development goals.

Participation

The strong participation of civil society in all its expressions is strategically and instrumentally important for realizing the agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development

73. States reaffirmed the key role of inclusive and participatory approaches to governance, echoing a key recommendation from the Programme of Action that population and development issues be addressed in a participatory manner. States emphasized that participatory governance demanded vigilance and adaptability. The most effective responses to development challenges could be obtained only through the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations, community-based organizations, the private sector and intended beneficiaries.

Increasing the participation of women and young people in decision-making and in political, social and economic processes nationally and globally is critical for the fulfilment of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014[4]

74. States called for the empowerment of women and the promotion of their greater participation in planning and decision-making with regard to policies and programmes, noting that that could lead to greater protection and empowerment for all vulnerable members of society and to more equitable and sustainable development. States also emphasized the importance of participatory consultation processes with women, youth and other groups on the mechanisms that would best represent their rights.

Integrating population dynamics into development planning

The impact of population dynamics on society requires that population trends be integrated into development planning at the national, regional and international levels

75. States widely acknowledged the importance of population dynamics to future development planning. It was noted that many countries were faced with responding

to the challenges of demographic change, including one or more of the following: growing numbers of young people, population ageing, internal and international migration, urbanization, low fertility and continued high fertility. Demographic change was seen as both a challenge and a potential opportunity, and population policies and programmes were suggested as enablers for achieving sustainable development. States called for further incorporation of demographic trends into all aspects of national planning.

Strengthening knowledge and accountability systems

Strengthening knowledge systems to generate and use demographic data is crucial

76. States emphasized the importance of routine demographic data collection, including civil registration, vital statistics and regular population censuses. They called urgently for adequate resource allocation and for cooperative action and collaboration between Governments, relevant United Nations agencies and other stakeholders to ensure the capacity necessary for effective production and use of population data.

There is a need to reinforce national capacity for data collection, use and dissemination across multiple sectors that affect development

77. It was noted that national capacity across multiple sectors was needed for implementing and monitoring evidence-based programming for the agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development. States highlighted the urgent need to strengthen national capacity to generate, disseminate and effectively use demographic and socioeconomic data as part of local, regional and sectoral planning and policy development, through the improvement of institutional and human resources.

Monitoring, evaluation and transparency are central to accountability

78. States made a general call for higher accountability, greater transparency and better-functioning mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation. Strengthened national capacity for data collection and analysis was needed to facilitate accurate monitoring and evaluation of programmes, as part of well-functioning and transparent accountability systems. All relevant stakeholders should be involved in strengthening the capacity of local experts and relevant institutions.

E. Sustainability

Population dynamics, environmental sustainability and climate change

79. Many States acknowledged the interactions between population dynamics, the environment and sustainable development, stressing the need to better integrate population dynamics into policies and programmes for environmental preservation, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and mitigation. States said that they were increasingly facing environmental threats, including flooding and drought, and other climate-related hazards such as sea-level rise, desertification, ocean acidification and loss of biodiversity, which were threatening livelihoods, in particular those of the most vulnerable. Unsustainable production and consumption patterns, environmental degradation and the need to balance the requirements of a

growing population with the sustainable utilization of the natural resource base were also mentioned.

There is a widespread need to strengthen the capacity of Governments to predict, prepare for and mitigate the effects of climate change and related natural disasters

80. Several States drew attention to the role of climate change and environmental crises in population displacement and migration, in addition to the need for government capacity to tackle climate change. Concern was expressed that climate change could interrupt development, exposing the poorest members of society, especially those living in fragile ecosystems, to substantial risks of displacement and loss of livelihood. In addition, hope was expressed that the benefits of technological investment in areas such as renewable energy, water treatment, waste management and desalination could not only protect the environment but also open up economic opportunities and empower individuals. Some States noted that the solutions to climate change went beyond the capacity of any single nation and required collective global action and sector-wide strategies to build resilient societies.

V. Beyond 2014

Sustainable development depends on the success of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014[4]

81. Throughout the discussions, States expressed widespread support for the continuing centrality of the agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development to global development and to ensuring that the principles and objectives of the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation were carried forward in the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals, taking into account the findings and recommendations of the operational review. Similar sentiments were expressed by many civil society organizations.

82. All countries recognized the substantial achievements in the implementation of the Programme of Action, together with areas of insufficient progress and remaining challenges. Recurrent in the statements was the need to continue efforts to improve the living conditions of all population groups, eradicate poverty and reduce the large social and economic inequalities existent in the world. Many States noted that the Commission played an essential role in assessing the implementation of the Programme of Action.

83. Governments emphasized the importance of the foundation of the Programme of Action on human rights and a continued people-centred approach for the post-2015 agenda, urging the international community to give priority to the core goals of gender equality, empowerment of women, investment in young people, inclusive economic growth and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and at the same time to capitalize on the opportunities resulting from population trends, to address climate change urgently and to ensure environmental sustainability.